

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

April 26, 2016

Department of Regional Planning Civic Center Headquarters

There are valid concerns about moving the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) headquarters operations and the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) from County-owned facilities in the downtown civic center that are currently adjacent to the Hall of Administration and in proximity to public transit (Metro Rail and Bus), to a new privately-owned location in Alhambra. The Chief Executive Office's June 18, 2015 report describes this as a temporary move, while long-term options are developed to move them again, with the full Center to an unspecified permanent County-owned space. The Board has not yet acted on the recommendations contained in the June 2015 report.

At the same time, the County is pursuing an e-based, user-friendly permitting process that is convenient and efficient for permit applicants, it is still in the early stages of implementation, and experience has shown us that we must be cautious about rolling out prospective changes, including major changes to office space, that may be related to the success of permit tracking software and data projects. Too often, the County has rushed into embracing data-sharing efforts (such as PALMS/eDAPTs) only to be burned in the end.

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The Planning Department is engaged in reshaping the development of a sustainable Los Angeles County, and while it may make sense to staff public counter services, application processing, land development permitting and counseling services, and co-locate those DRP services with other departments at a “super center” location (such as in the downtown Hall of Records or at a facility in Alhambra), it is essential that the RPC and DRP Headquarters, including planning and policy-making functions, must remain in downtown Los Angeles at its current Civic Center location near the County Hall of Administration.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

Direct the Chief Executive Officer to bring back to the Board for discussion and consideration in 60 days, an updated plan to maintain the Department of Regional Planning headquarters operations in the current downtown Hall of Records location, with two options provided for 1) some DRP staff for public counter, application processing, land development permitting and counseling services, to co-locate services with other departments at a Regional One Stop Development Center in Alhambra, and 2) the collocation of staff from the DPW, Fire, Public Health, Treasurer and Tax Collector, and Consumer and Business Affairs in downtown Los Angeles at the DRP’s current Civic Center location near the County Hall of Administration.

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